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USDA'S REPORT TO CONSUMERS

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PRODUCTOS LACTEOS

Makes It Thirteen. "Como Comprar Productos Lacteos" (How To Buy Dairy Products) recently joined the ranks of USDA consumer publications. The pamphlet tells how to buy, use, and care for dairy products, provides a dairy dictionary covering the wide variety of dairy products on the market, and explains USDA quality grades found on such products as cheese and butter. "Como Comprar Productos Lacteos" is the thirteenth in a series of publications on how to buy food to be published in Spanish. Others in the series are:

- Como Comprar Fruta Fresca (G-141-S)
- Como Comprar Hortalizas Frescas (G-143-S)
- Como Comprar Bistecs (G-145-S)
- Como Comprar Carne para Conservar en el Refrigerador (G-166-S)
- Como Comprar Habas, Guisantes y Lentejas en Seco (G-177-S)
- Como Comprar Los Huevos (G-144-S)
- Como Comprar Los Asados de Carne de Vaca (G-146-S)
- Como Comprar Hortalizas Enlatadas y Congeladas (G-167-S)
- Como Comprar Las Aves de Corral (G-157-S)
- Como Comprar El Queso (G-193-S)
- Como Comprar Cordero (G-195-S)
- Como Comprar La Fruta Enlatada y Congelada (G-191-S)

Single free copies of "Como Comprar Productos Lacteos" (G-201-S), or of any of the other pamphlets, are available from the Office of Communication, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

WILD RICE BY ANY OTHER NAME

Is Grass. Wild rice, that delicious delight of gourmet and anyone else who has tried it, is not really rice. It is an aquatic grass not even closely related to common rice.



A LOT ABOUT FOOD AND NUTRITION

Catalog Lists Library Collection. The Food and Nutrition Information and Educational Materials Center of USDA's National Agricultural Library has recently published a catalog of the materials in the Center's collection. The catalog contains 2,366 annotated citations which include books, pamphlets, audio-visuals, and journal articles on food service and nutrition education. These materials are available on loan to persons working in these fields. This useful catalog is available free from the Food and Nutrition Information and Education Materials Center, National Agricultural Library, Room 304, Beltsville, Maryland 20705.

A SAFER CIGARETTE?

Researchers Pipe Dream? It is apparent that people are going to smoke -- warnings or not. In 1972, cigarette production topped all records with the output of 601 billion cigarettes. How about a "safer" cigarette? Not out of the question, based on early results of studies underway by USDA's Agricultural Research Service. The research goal is to develop "safer" cigarettes than those presently available, that will be economically worthwhile for farmers and manufacturers, and give smokers the quality cigarette they want. Researchers are aiming for production of a cigarette tobacco that would generate a smoke which is low in, or free from, known hazardous components -- not an easy target since scientists have identified more than 1,300 compounds in tobacco and tobacco smoke. Experiments have shown that properties of leaf tobacco, such as nicotine, may be adjusted through plant breeding and farm production techniques. Studies are being conducted also to determine any relationship between the tobacco-health issue and new tobacco varieties and modern production methods. Preliminary findings indicate a "safer" tobacco can be developed.

KEEP YOUR POINSETTIAS HAPPY

Keep Cool. If your house is cool this winter because of the energy crisis, look to your poinsettias. It will warm your heart to see how they thrive in cool temperatures. In fact, USDA horticulturists say that poinsettias will literally bloom their heads off in temperatures in the low 60's. With proper care, the poinsettias you bought or received at Christmas will keep their bright color for a long time -- say from Christmas well into April or May. Proper poinsettia care means giving the plants a shot of fertilizer shortly after Christmas; watering only about every three or four days; keeping the plants in bright indirect light at least six hours each day -- and, of course, not letting them lose their cool.

PUTTING FIRE IN ITS PLACE

It Warms The Hearth. Relaxing before a warm glowing fire in the fireplace is easier -- and aesthetically more desirable -- than sitting in front of your central heating system. And happily, a fireplace can be a practical complement to your heating system, possibly a means of coping with the fuel energy crisis. According to USDA's Forest Service, wood is the fuel for a fireplace. It is much lower in irritating pollutants than most fuels; it is a renewable fuel resource; it leaves a low ash residue (which can be useful as a garden fertilizer); and it smells good. In keeping with this philosophy, the Forest Service recently eased restrictions on cutting free firewood in National Forests. Permits are now granted to the general public to cut firewood for personal use in any of the 155 National Forests. The Forest Service's definition of firewood is "dead timber and timber not more valuable for other purposes." Previously, permits were issued only to persons living within or very near the Forests. Another Forest Service aid to fireplace owners is a new leaflet which gives information on where to get your wood, by axe or cash; burning characteristics of various kinds of wood and the best types for your fireplace; and instructions on how to build a better and safer fire. Single free copies of the leaflet, "Enjoy Your Fireplace, Especially During the Energy Crisis," are available from the Forest Service, Upper Darby, Pennsylvania 19082.

THE NEW YEARBOOK OF AGRICULTURE

A Handy Book To Have Around Home. The latest Yearbook of Agriculture, "Handbook For The Home," is a book for families and their homes -- whether a suburban house, a country place, or a city apartment. Consumers will find answers to questions and solutions to problems that arise around the home and community -- and some guidelines on sidestepping pitfalls that could lead to problems. The wealth of information within the yearbook's 400 pages and 78 chapters deals with four major subjects: Families, Dwellings, Furnishings, and Communities. The many topics include: Living costs and money management; record keeping; indoor gardening; camping and recreational vehicles; financing a home and house plans; insurance; safety in the home; making housework easier; floor covering, drapes, and lighting; appliances, TV and sound systems; clothing decisions; luggage; guidelines for community services; cultural opportunities; environmental planning -- and on and on. Many chapters contain Suggested Further Reading Lists and refer readers to information sources such as State Extension services, trade associations, public utility companies, and consumer magazines and newspaper columns. The hardback book, which contains more than 190 photographs, is on sale for \$5.70 from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402. Free copies are not available from the USDA, however, each Member of Congress has a limited number of copies for free distribution to his constituents.

COOKING FOR TWO

Menus And Amounts. If you are chief cook for yourself alone or for yourself and your roommate -- husband, buddy, whomever -- sometimes you might find it difficult to estimate the amount of food needed for one or two servings. An egg is a serving of egg, of course, but not all serving amounts are that easy to figure. Most recipes come in family-size portions; but what you need are four drop biscuits or beef stew for two. Cutting down on some of these recipes may result in odd tasting dishes or beef stew for a week. A new booklet from USDA's Food and Nutrition Service can be helpful in your situation. "Cooking For Two" (PA-1043) gives recipes for main dishes, salads, breads, desserts, soups, and other foods in two-serving amounts. It includes helpful hints on planning and serving meals and menu ideas. One section gives information on foods needed to maintain health -- particularly helpful for persons planning meals and cooking for themselves for the first time. Copies of the booklet are \$1.10 each from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402.

FOOD STAMP PROGRAM EXPANDED

New Regulations For The New Year. Participants in the Food Stamp Program may earn more money and still be eligible to take part in the program under new regulations effective January 1, 1974. Also, the value of the food stamps they may purchase will be increased. The regulation changes mean, for instance, that a family of four may have a monthly income of \$473 -- an increase over the current \$387 -- and still participate in the program. Their coupon allotment (the dollar value of food stamps a household may purchase) will increase to \$142 from the current \$116. Coupon allotments are periodically adjusted to reflect changes in the prices of food. This adjustment has been made annually but now is to be made semiannually. Appropriate adjustments will be made for household sizes beginning with one person households. The maximum income eligibility increases will affect households of two persons or more. Eligibility for a one person family remains unchanged at \$183. More than 95% of the 12.3 million Food Stamp Program participants will benefit from the changes and an increase in the number of participants is expected with the increase in the maximum income eligibility.

SERVICE is a monthly newsletter of consumer interest. It is designed for those who report to the individual consumer rather than for mass distribution. For information about items in this issue, write: Lillie Vincent, Editor of SERVICE, Office of Communication, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250. Telephone (202) 447-5437.
